THE LADY'S

WEEKLY MISCELLANY.

" To wake the soul by tender strokes of art,
" To raise the genius, and to mend the heart."

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Selected for the Lady's Miscellany.

THE CAPTAIN OF BANDITTI.

A TRUE STORY.

COUNT L——, a man of courage, genius, and fortune, was once travelling through a tract of the Spessart Forest, in Germany. He had just reached the thickest and less frequented part of this lonely district. A single domestic was his only attendant; the season was cold, the day short and gloomy. Neither the Count nor his servant had ever been in this country before. It was, therefore, no wonder that, when it began to grow dark, they lost their road, and involved themselves more and more in the forest, not withstanding all their endeavours to find their way out.

At length they beheld a distant, glimmering light. The Count considered this as a sign of a human habitation; his servant concluded it to be a ghost. The one expected to find a cottage where he might obtain shelter, the other was apprehensive lest they should the next moment be plunged into a bog. The one was pleased, the other was terrified. The servant proposed to pass the night under the next tree; the Count laughed at him, and made towards the light. The more courageous of the two, was, as usual, in the right; for on their arrival they found it to be a public house. No sooner had they knocked, than the door was opened; they were promised every possible accommodation for the night, and the Count was shewn into an apartment more decent than could have been expected in such a situation.

The satisfaction of our traveller was not of long duration. He was walking to and fro in his room, waiting for his repast, when his servant entered. In his looks, in his erect hair, in the trembling of his limbs, in short, in his whole appearance, he was a living personification of terror.

The following dialogue succeeded:—

'Can any one overhear us, Sir?"

'How can I tell? But what is the matter with you?'

'Ah! Sir, we are children of death—verily and truly children of death.'

'Like all the rest of mankind, I should imagine.'

'O! no, no!—Now, this very night we have got into a den of murderers.'

'Are you romancing?'—asked the Count, at the same time seizing with commendable precaution, a pistol which he had carelessly laid upon the table. 'What have you got into your head? Some fancy, I suppose, like that which took you on the way hither!'

'Would to heaven it were! But I only tell what my own eyes have seen.'

'Your eyes! Tell me then immediately what you have seen, without any of your interruptions, or foolish stories.'

'They had given me too little hay for our horses. I looked about in every corner for more, and found another stable with a truss lying in it. I was going to take it away, when I perceived behind it a door that was not fastened. Where must this go to, and why is it concealed in this manner, thought I. I peeped in first, and at length crept into the place; but, good God! how my blood was chilled at the sight!'

'Of what?'

"Of weapons of all sorts, cutlasses, pistols, and guns; great heaps of clothes, and blood upon almost all of them.'

The Count was somewhat startled. 'Blood!' he repeated within himself, taking a contemplative turn or two in the room, and again asked his servant, whether he was sure his eyes had not deceived him. He then ordered him to lead the horses as quickly, and as softly as possible out of the stable.

'Ah! Sir,' replied the man, 'out of the stable they may be got easily enough, but not out of the yard; the gate is locked. To see whether that was open was my first thought.'

'Bravo! and to leave me in the lurch your second. Well, if nothing else can be done, I must take my precautions like a prudent man, and defend myself like a brave one. Adopt what measure you please, while I, for my part, shall consider what is to be done.'

The servant was now obliged, though much against his will, to return to the stable. The Count placed his chair in the corner exactly opposite the door, a table before him prevented the too near approach of any person in front, and the wall covered him in the rear. Before him, on the table, he laid two loaded pis-